

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1 - 10. (cancelled)

11. (currently amended) A linking element for a spinal fixation system designed to link at least two implantable connecting assemblies, wherein said element comprises at least partly of a support made of polymer material and of a two rods, a first of said rods being curved or not, substantially coaxial with said support, a second of said rods being formed of turns surrounding the first of said rods, and said turns being at least partly embedded in said support.

12. (previously presented) The linking element as claimed in claim 11, wherein said support has a substantially tubular or cylindrical shape.

13. (currently amended) The linking element according to claim 11, ~~further comprising~~ wherein the turns of the second rod form a helical spring having an axis substantially parallel with an axis of said support and turns, said turns being at least partly embedded in said support.

14. (previously presented) The linking element as claimed in claim 13, wherein said rod is substantially coaxial with said spring.

15. (previously presented) The linking element as claimed in claim

13, wherein said rod has an external diameter smaller than an internal diameter of said turns.

16. (previously presented) The linking element as claimed in claim 11, wherein said element further comprises a straight or curved stiffening element.

17. (previously presented) The linking element as claimed in claim 16, wherein said stiffening element is composed of a sheet of material with a substantially U-shaped cross section.

18. (currently amended) A spinal fixation system comprising at least two implantable connecting assemblies linked by at least one linking element, said at least one linking element comprising at least partly of a support made of polymer material and of a two rods, a first of said rods being curved or not, substantially coaxial with said support, a second of said rods being formed of turns surrounding the first of said rods, and said turns being at least partly embedded in said support.

19. (previously presented) The spinal fixation system as claimed in claim 18, further comprising a stiffening element fixed at least to the two implantable connecting assemblies.

20. (previously presented) The spinal fixation system as claimed in claim 18, further comprising at least one rigid linking element.